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TAGS: [KCFE](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [NATO](#)

SUBJECT: NORWAY'S RESPONSE ON CFE: GON WILL ADVOCATE FOR
NORWAY'S PARTICIPATION IN THE "SUPPORTING GROUP OF NATO
ALLIES"

REF: SECSTATE 92528

Classified By: Counselor for Political and Economic Affairs Cherrie Daniels for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

1. (C) PolOff delivered reftel points September 9 to Norwegian MFA Director for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Affairs Inga Nyhamar and Senior Advisor Lars Loken. Nyhamar said that Norway would like to join what she referred to as the Supporting Group of NATO Allies, the proposed small group of interested allies, Russia, and the U.S. that would discuss the way forward on CFE Treaty issues. She said the Norwegian delegation to NATO would advocate for their inclusion in the group during the upcoming September 11 preparatory meeting for the September 17 HLTF. Both Nyhamar and Loken plan to attend the September 17 meeting in Brussels, where they advised a decision is expected on participation in the Supporting Group.

2. (C) Loken advocated for Norway's inclusion in the Group on the basis of the fact that the country shares a border with Russia and is particularly vulnerable to Russian Conventional Forces Europe (CFE) treaty non-compliance. Nyhamar chimed in, noting Norway's concern, similar to Turkey's, about Russia's CFE flank regime violations. Norway has not been allowed to inspect and verify Russian troop movements along their shared border since Russia suspended CFE implementation in December 2007, she said. Loken went on to explain that the current low number of Norwegian troops in northern areas of the country is based on a "stable scenario," and that the mechanics of the flank regime had previously served as a "trip-wire," to determine when and whether Norway should increase troop levels. Norway no longer has that trip-wire, he said. Loken pointed out that Norway does have another safeguard, in the form of a 1966 Norway - Russia political agreement to not mass troops in the northern areas, but Nyhamar quickly added that maintaining a multilateral vice bilateral agreement on the issue is a key element of Norway's security policy.

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